House of Commons Debates

FIRST SESSION—TENTH PARLIAMENT

SPEECH

OF

RT. HON. SIR WILFRID LAURIER, G.C.M.G.,

ON

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT IN THE NORTH-WEST

HOUSE OF COMMONS, OTTAWA, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1905

Rt. Hon. Sir WILFRID LAURIER (Prime Minister) moved for leave to introduce Bill (No. 69) to establish and provide for the government of the province of Alberta. He said: Mr. Speaker, the Bill which I have now the honour to present is for the admission of another member into the Canadian family of provinces. As the House, no doubt, has noticed, this Bill is to be followed immediately by another for the same purpose, in relation to the province of Saskatchewan. These two Bills are intimately connected; they form part of the same subject; and, by your leave, Sir, the explanations which I shall have the honour to give to the House, will apply to both. They will apply likewise to the resolutions which will be introduced as the basis for the financial clauses of these Bills.

It has been observed on the floor of this House, as well as outside of this House, that as the nineteenth century had been the century of the United States, so the twentieth century would be the century of Canada. This opinion has not been deemed extravagant. On this continent and across the waters, it has been accepted as the statement of a truth, beyond controversy. The wonderful development of the United States during the space of scarcely more than one hundred years may well be an incitement to our efforts and our ambition. Yet to the emulation of such an example there may well be some exception taken; for if it be true that settlement of the western portion of the American union has been marked by almost phenomenal rapidity, it is also true that every other consideration seems to have been sacrificed to this one consideration of rapid growth. Little attention was given, up to the last few years, to the materials which were introduced into the republic; little regard was paid among the new settlers to the observance of the law; and it is not a slander upon our neighbours—for, indeed, the fact is admitted in their current literature—that frontier civilization was with them a by-word for lawlessness. We have proceeded upon different methods. We have been satisfied with slower progress. Our institutions in our own Northwest have been developed by gradual stages, so as to ensure at all times among these new communities law and order, and the restraints and safeguards of the highest civilization.

The time has arrived when we are all agreed, I believe, nay, I feel sure, upon both sides of the House, that another step, and the last, can now be taken to complete the passage of the Northwest Territories from what was once necessary tutelage, into the fulness of the rights which, under our constitution, appertain to provinces.

I may remind the House, though the fact is well known to every body, that when

confederation was established in the year 1867, the Canada of that day was not at all what is the Canada of the present day. The Canada of that day did not extend beyond the western limits of the province of Ontario. On the other side of the continent, on the shores of the Pacific ocean, there was a British colony, British Columbia, absolutely isolated; and between British Columbia on one side and Ontario on the other side there was a vast extent of territory, the fairest portion perhaps of the continent, which was under British sovereignty, but in which British sovereignty had always been dormant. That vast extent of the continent, the fairest, as I said, and the most fertile, was administered, loosely administered by the Hudson Bay Company, under a charter which the company claimed, gave her almost sovereign sway, and which she used to keep this vast extent of country as a close preserve for her immense operations in the fur trade. I need not tell you, Sir, the fact is well known and present to the memory of all, that it was the intention of the fathers of confederation not to limit it to the comparatively narrow bounds in which it was included in 1867, but to extend it eastward and westward between the two oceans. I need hardly tell you, Sir, the fact is known to all and well remembered by every one, that provision was made in the instrument of confederation itself, for the admission into confederation of British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, and even Newfoundland, and especially for these territories which at last have come in to-day as part of the Canadian family. In the very first year of confederation, the very first session of the first parliament, resolutions were introduced into this House and adopted unanimously for the acquisition of Rupert's Land and the Northwest Territories, and the extinguishment therein of the title of the Hudson Bay Company. This was accomplished in a very short time, and as soon as accomplished, the government of that day, the government of Sir John Macdonald, proceeded to carve the new province of Manitoba out of the wilderness, and without any preliminary stage endowed it at once with all the rights and privileges of a province.

If we go back to the history of those days, perhaps the opinion will not be unwarranted that it would have been a wiser course, if instead of bringing Manitoba at once into the confederation full fledged and fully equipped as a province, that maturity had been reached by gradual stages extended over a few years. If that course had been adopted, perhaps some mistakes would have been avoided from the effects of which we have not yet completely recovered.

Very different was the course and policy of Mr. Mackenzie when he came into office with regard to the Northwest Territory. Up to the year 1875 the Northwest Territories had been administered under no special form of government. But in 1875 Mr. Mackenzie, being then Prime Minister of Canada, introduced into this House and carried unanimously a measure, a very important measure, the object of which, as he said himself, was to give to the Northwest Territories an 'entirely independent government.' This measure has been the charter under which the Northwest Territories have come to their present state of manhood. It has never been repealed. Additions have been made to it from time to time, but it has remained and is to this day the rock upon which has been reared the structure, which we are about to crown with complete and absolute autonomy. By this measure it was provided that a Lieutenant Governor should be appointed for the Northwest Territories. The Lieutenant Governor was to be vested with executive power, and he was to administer that power with the assistance of a council to be composed of five members, the Lieutenant Governor and his advisers to be appointed by the Governor in Council. Apart from these administrative powers the Lieutenant Governor was also invested with large legislative authority. He could make laws for taxation, for local and municipal purposes, property and civil rights, the administration of justice, public health, police, roads, highways and bridges—generally all matters of a purely local and private nature. There was also an enactment in that measure to the effect that when any district, not exceeding 1,000 square miles, contained a population of not less than 1,000 people of adult age, exclusive of aliens and unenfranchised Indians, it could be erected into an electoral district which should thenceforward be entitled to elect a member to the council. There was also an important enactment with regard to education, introducing into that country the system of separate schools in force in the province of Ontario. But I shall say nothing at the present time of this important part of the law of 1875, as I propose to come again to it at a later stage of the observations which I desire to offer to the House. This Act remained in force without any important modifications up to the year 1886, when the Territories were given representation in this parliament. Two years later an important step in advance was also taken in their development, that is to say, in 1888. The executive council was abolished, so far, at all events, as its powers of legislation were concerned, and a legislative assembly was created, to be composed of twenty-five members, twenty-two of which were to be elected by the people and three to be known as legal experts, to be appointed by the Governor in Council; and a new executive council was to be appointed under the name of advisory council to advise the Lieutenant Governor upon all matters of finance. In 1891 another step forward was taken, and a very important one. The legislative assembly of the Territories was given additional powers; and if you take

section 92 of the British North America Act and compare it with the powers which were then given to the legislature, you will find that that legislature was invested with powers almost as complete as those which are vested in the provinces under the British North America Act. In fact, with the exception of borrowing money most of the essential powers which are now given to the provinces were given to the legislative assembly of the Northwest Territories. In 1894 another departure, another change, was made—I call it a departure. The change which was then made was not, in my estimation, quite in accordance with the spirit of our constitution. It was that the legislative assembly could select four members of its own body to be called an executive committee to advise the Lieutenant Governor. This is not, as I say, in accordance with the principles of the British constitution. It is not in accordance with the principles of British constitution that parliament itself should elect the members who are to advise the Crown. The principle of the British constitution is that the Crown, or the representative of the Crown selects, himself, his own advisers; and under our own well known practice in these modern days, the only restriction put upon the executive, the Crown, or the sovereign, is that he must select advisers who have the support of a majority of the elected body. This new departure introduced in the statute of 1894 did not last long, and at this I am not surprised. In 1897 another and a final change took place. In 1897 an Act was passed in this House whereby it was provided that there should be an executive council to be chosen by the Lieutenant Governor from the members of the House, and practically having the support of a majority of the elected members of the legislature. This was in fact the last and final concession and it was the application of the principle of ministerial responsibility. This has been the law ever since; it is the law to-day. So that, Sir, it is manifest that at this moment the people of the Northwest Territories are in the enjoyment and have been for several years, not only of full ministerial responsibility, not only of full constitutional government, but also of a large measure of local autonomy. A great deal has been done, in fact, more has been done than we have to do to-day. We have to take the last step but it is easy and comparatively unimportant in view of and in comparison with what has already been accomplished. The metal has been in the crucible and all we have to do now, is to put the stamp of Canadian nationality upon it.

The House is aware that some two years ago or thereabouts there came to us a very general desire from the Northwest Territories for immediate admission into the confederation as provinces. I did not believe at the time for my part, that this request, respectable as it was, proceeded so much from an actual need as from a sentiment. It was to me the expression of a sentiment, a sentiment most honourable, a sentiment most worthy because it was an expression of the self-reliance of young and ambitious communities. The House is also aware of the answer which we gave to the Territories at that time. We represented to them that in our judgment, the time was inopportune for taking this question into parliament, that as we were on the eve of a general election, the time and occasion would be more propitious and more fitting after that event when the Territories would have the benefit on this floor of a larger representation. These views were generally accepted. The elections have taken place and immediately after the elections, or as soon as was practicable thereafter, we invited the executive of the Northwest Territories to send delegates here to confer with us upon the measure which was to be introduced so as to admit them into the confederation. We have had the benefit of the presence of Mr. Haultain, the Premier of the Northwest Territories and of Mr. Bulyea, one of his colleagues, and we have had the advantage of several conferences with them. We have had the advantage also of the presence and advice of several of the members from the Territories, and now, Sir, it is my privilege and my honour—I deem it indeed a privilege and an honour—to offer this Bill to the House.

When we came to consider the problem before us it became very soon apparent to me, at all events, that there were four subjects which dominated all the others; that the others were of comparatively minor importance, but that there were four which I was sure the parliament of Canada and the Canadian people at large might be expected to take a deep interest in. The first was: How many provinces should be admitted into the confederation coming from the Northwest Territories—one, or two or more? The next question was: in whom should be vested the ownership of the public lands? The third question was: What should be the financial terms to be granted to these new provinces? And the fourth and not the least important by any means was the question of the school system which would be introduced—not introduced because it was introduced long ago, but should be continued in the Territories.

Now, Sir, I will proceed to examine one after the other, all these questions. The first, as I have just said is: How many provinces should be admitted into the confederation? There is considerable variety, as everybody knows, in the area of the different provinces of the confederation. Prince Edward Island has an area of 2,184 miles, Nova Scotia 21,428 miles, New Brunswick 27,985 miles, Quebec

351,873, Ontario 260,862, Manitoba 73,732, and British Columbia 372,630, or a total area for the seven provinces of confederation of 1,110,694 miles. Now, the Territories which are to-day under the control and jurisdiction of the local legislature have exactly the same area as that of the seven provinces of the Dominion. The total area of the seven provinces, as I said a moment ago is 1,110,694 miles and the area of the different territories is as follows:

	Miles.
Assiniboia	88,879
Saskatchewan	107,618
Alberta	101,883
Athabaska	251,965
Mackenzie	562,182
Total	1,112,527

Or, an area a little greater than the total area of the seven provinces of the Dominion. Now, as I have said there is a great variety in the sizes of our provinces; in fact, it is very much with the Canadian Confederation as with the American Union. There are in the Canadian Confederation provinces of unequal sizes as there are in the American Union states of unequal sizes. It is not a fatal fault as has been proved by the history of the American Union, but I believe that when provinces are not the result of historic tradition, when they have not come to us formed and when we have the control of events, it is preferable that the provinces should be as near as possible about the same size. Therefore, it is impossible to suppose that this immense territory of 1,112,527 miles should be formed into one single province. There is another objection. The territories are naturally divided into two portions from the point of view of agriculture, climate, and productions generally, the northern portion and the southern portion, and I would place the boundary of these two sections a little south of the boundary which now divides the provisional district of Mackenzie from the provisional district of Athabaska. This northern portion of the continent has not yet been fully explored, but still we know enough of it, there has been enough exploration of it and it has been travelled over sufficiently, to make us sure that it is absolutely unfit for agriculture. The climate is too cold and the soil is too poor. There are, however, very excellent and very promising indications of mineral wealth in that district. There are indications to-day of petroleum, coal, gold, copper and other minerals, and perhaps some day we may have in what is to-day a barren section, another Yukon. But we know by the experience of the past that mineral wealth, when not coupled with agriculture, is but a precarious ground on which to found the hope of thick and permanent settlement. Therefore, we put aside this northern section; but the southern section is of an absolutely different character.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. What does the right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) refer to exactly?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I would divide the two sections at about the line which now divides the provisional district of Mackenzie and the provisional district of Athabaska, about the 60th parallel of north latitude.

The southern section is of a different character. It is absolutely an agricultural country, and I need not say that it is one of the finest in the world to-day. It is traversed by large rivers flowing from the Rocky mountains to Hudson's bay, and the valley of the Saskatchewan is, as every one knows, equal in fertility to the valley of the Red river. Everybody knows also that the valley of the Red river and the valley of the Saskatchewan are to-day the most fertile wheat fields under the sun. We propose to give autonomy, not to the whole of the Territories, but to that section which extends from the American boundary up to the boundary line between the provisional district of Mackenzie and the provisional district of Athabaska, that is the 60th parallel of north latitude.

When we were first approached on this subject, it was proposed to us that we should make a province extending from the American boundary up to the 57th parallel, that is to say, somewhat to the south of the provisional boundary between the provisional districts of Mackenzie and Athabaska, but we thought it preferable to take in the whole district of Athabaska. The reason for this is, that although Athabaska is not considered to be a fertile country, and the eastern portion of it is barren, the western portion, the valley of the Peace river, is equal to the valley of the Saskatchewan and settlement there is already proceeding rapidly. There are to-day on the Peace river two grist mills, provided absolutely from wheat grown in the Peace river valley, and therefore we have decided to include within the new provinces the provisional district of Athabaska. The area of these two provinces together will be about 550,345 square miles. This is, in our estimation, altogether too large an area to be made into one single province according to the size of the other provinces, the largest of which is British Columbia, and the next largest Quebec, British Columbia with an area of 372,000 square miles and Quebec with an area of 351,000 square miles. By dividing it into two you have two provinces of 275,000 square miles in round numbers, each about the size of the province of Ontario. If any of the members of the House will care to look at the map, they will see that we have put the provisional boundary on the fourth meridian and according to our present information, this will give about the same

area and also the same population to the two provinces. It is estimated that the population to-day in these two provinces is about 500,000 souls. We have no accurate data, but we can proceed pretty confidently upon this information. The census in 1901 gave to these Northwest Territories a population of a little over 160,000 souls. Since that time, during the seasons of 1901, 1902, 1903 and 1904, the population, by immigration alone, has increased by over 100,000 a year, so that to-day we feel we are on pretty safe ground when we say that there is in those two provinces a total population of 500,000 souls, and we calculate that this population is about equally divided between the two provinces, giving a population of 250,000 to each.

Since I am upon the question of boundaries I shall also come to another question, connected therewith, that is to say, the demand which has been made upon us by the province of Manitoba for an extension of its boundaries, westward, northward and eastward. Yesterday a morning paper in this city published an interview given by the Hon. Mr. Rogers, a member of the government of Manitoba, upon this subject. I shall take the liberty of referring to that interview of Mr. Rogers, so that the House will better understand the point to which I am about to direct its attention. Mr. Rogers said in this interview:

It is not a matter of agreement. We are simply presenting the unanimous request of the people of our province for the extension of our boundaries at least as far west as Regina and north as far as the northern boundary of Athabaska, which would include Fort Churchill, the Nelson river and the territory tributary thereto. This is no new request on behalf of Manitoba. In 1901 a resolution was introduced in the legislature by Mr. T. A. Burrows, then a member of the legislature and now a member of the Dominion parliament. This resolution was supported by Mr. Greenway, who was then leader of the opposition, now a member of the House of Commons. This was accepted and supported by the government of the day and voted for by every member of the House. A similar resolution was introduced by Mr. Roblin, leader of the government, and unanimously carried in 1902. A further resolution was introduced at the recent session and voted for by every member of the legislature, in which action they reflected the unanimous desire of all Manitobans. Mr. Campbell and myself have been appointed to come here to plead for what is considered by Manitoba to be her just claims, before the government who are the tribunal in the case and whose decision must be final.

I may observe that Mr. Rogers might have gone back much further than 1901 for records of the presentation of the claims of Manitoba for an extension of territory. Indeed as far back as 1884 a similar request was presented to the government of Sir John Macdonald. At that time the Privy Council dealt with this question in these words:

The boundaries of Manitoba were originally fixed at the instance of the delegates from that province who came to Ottawa in 1870 to adjust with the government of Canada the terms upon which Manitoba was to enter the confederation of Her Majesty's North American provinces.

The limits then agreed to embrace an area of about 9,500,000 acres. In the year 1881 these limits were enlarged and territory added to the west and north, making the total area of the province 36,000,000 acres or 150,000 square miles.

The further enlargement now asked for by Manitoba would add about 130,000 square miles to the already large area of the province, and would be viewed with disfavour as well by the old provinces as by the new districts of Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Athabaska, which have been created in the Northwest Territories, and which will ultimately become provinces of the Dominion. It would largely add to the expense of the government, without increasing the resources of Manitoba, already pronounced by the government of the province to be insufficient to meet its normal and necessary expense.

The committee, under those circumstances, humbly submit to Your Excellency, that it is inexpedient to alter the boundaries of the province as prayed for.

This answer to the request of Manitoba was a categorical refusal. I may say that there is an error in this Order in Council. It states that the area of the province of Manitoba at that time was 150,000 square miles, whereas it was only 73,000. That, however, is not very material. But I want to point out that the request of Manitoba now is one which could not be granted except with great difficulty. It would have been far more easy for the government of that day, twenty years ago, to have extended the limits of Manitoba than it would be to-day. At that time the Territories were still in their infancy; but to-day they have grown to manhood, and how can it be expected that we shall take from them a portion of their territory to give it to Manitoba? If this could not be done in 1884, I submit that there is still less reason for doing it in 1905.

Mr. SPROULE. Might I ask the right hon. gentleman if in that calculation was not included the disputed territory between Manitoba and Lake Superior?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. No, I think not. It was in dispute at that very moment. But even if it had been included, what would it have mattered? We want to deal as fairly as we can with Manitoba and to give it all the consideration which is due to her. But is there a member of this House who would advise us that we should carve out of the Territories which for thirty years have been under the jurisdiction of their own legislature, which are to-day represented by ten members in this House, any portion of what belongs to them and hand it over to the province of Manitoba against the consent of the people of those territories? If they agreed to it, well and good; I would have nothing to say. But the legislature of the Territories has more than once declared that they would not under any

circumstances consent to any portion of their territory westward of the province of Manitoba being taken from them.

There is another consideration. For my part, I am prepared to give a full hearing to the province of Manitoba. When that province asks to have her limits extended westward, I am bound to say that we cannot entertain that prayer, for this simple reason, that the Territories, through their legislature, have passed upon it and have pronounced against it. But I understand that as to a certain portion of territory north of Lake Winnipegosis and Lake Manitoba, the Northwest legislature has declared that it has no pronounced views, and that that might be given to the province of Manitoba. But even this I am not prepared for my part to grant at this moment; because members representing that section to-day sit on the floor of this House, and they and their people have the right to be heard on that question; and if they do not agree to it, I do not think the parliament of Canada should make the grant against their wishes.

But, Sir, there is another demand of the province of Manitoba which I think is entitled to fair consideration. Manitoba has asked to have her territory extended to the shores of Hudson's bay; and this is a prayer which seems to me to be entitled to a fair hearing. The province of Manitoba is not, however, the only one whose territory could be extended towards Hudson's bay. The province of Ontario would have the same right; the province of Quebec would also have that right; and the new province of Saskatchewan also. Therefore, in the project which we have to present to the House to-day, instead of including in the province of Saskatchewan that portion of territory lying north of Lake Winnipegosis and Lake Manitoba, we propose to leave that outside, to be included neither in Saskatchewan nor in Manitoba, but to be dealt with at a future day. And I may say at once, and I have the authority of my colleagues to make the announcement, that we propose to invite the province of Ontario, the province of Quebec, the province of Manitoba and the province of Saskatchewan to meet us here to decide whether or not it is advisable that the limits of any of these provinces should be extended to the shores of Hudson's Bay, and if so, in what manner it should be done. We have not considered the matter yet, but perhaps it may not be unadvisable even to consult the other provinces. I venture to think that the proposal which I now make to the House with reference to the province of Manitoba is a fair one, which will commend itself to the approval of all those who have given the matter fair and impartial consideration.

The new provinces shall, as a matter of course, be represented on the floor of this House, and, until another election takes place, they shall continue to be represented as they are to-day. There will be in each province a legislative assembly, of which it is proposed that the number of members shall be twenty-five.

A question which has given some difficulty to the members of the committee who had the preparation of this Bill, has been the selection of the capitals of the respective provinces. As to the capital of the province of Saskatchewan, the difficulty is easily solved, it will be, as it is at present, Regina. But as to the capital of Alberta, the selection was not so easy. There were three claimants for it—Calgary, Red Deer and Edmonton, each of which had a good claim. We have decided that we would not make any final selection, leaving the final selection to the province itself. In the meantime, if you look at the map, you will see that Edmonton seems to be the most central point, and therefore we propose to make Edmonton the capital for the present.

Beyond this, I have only to say that it is the intention to have this Bill come into force on July 1 next.

The point being settled as to the number of provinces to be admitted into confederation, the next question is that regarding the public lands. In whom should the ownership of the lands be vested? Should they belong to the provinces or to the Dominion? A strong plea was presented to us on behalf of the provinces. It was represented that as a matter of law and of equity, the public lands in these two provinces should belong to their governments. This plea was no doubt suggested by the fact that at the time of confederation, all the parties to the original contract, that is to say, the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario and Quebec, each retained her own lands; and when at a later day the province of British Columbia was admitted to the Dominion, she also retained her lands. But, Sir, the cases are not at all parallel. When the provinces which I have named came into confederation, they were already sovereignties. I use that term, because barring their dependence as colonies they were sovereignties in the sense of having the management of their own affairs. Each had a department of government called the Crown Lands Department, which was entrusted with the power of dealing with those lands, either for revenue or for settlement. But the case of these new provinces is not at all similar. They never had the ownership of the lands. Those lands were bought by the Dominion government, and they have remained ever since the property of the Dominion government, and have been administered by the Dominion government. Therefore I say the two cases are not in any way parallel; they are indeed absolutely different. When the provinces which I have named came into confederation they retained the ownership of their

lands; but when the two new provinces come into the Dominion, it cannot be said that they can retain the ownership of their lands, as they never had the ownership.

Therefore, the proposition that in equity and justice these lands belong to the provinces is not tenable. But for my part I would not care, in a question of this importance, to rest the case on a mere abstract proposition. We must view it from the grounds of policy; and from the highest grounds of policy, I think it is advisable that the ownership of these lands should continue to be vested in the Dominion government. We have precedents for this. This is a case in which we can go to the United States for precedents. They are situated very much as we are regarding the ownership of lands and the establishment of new states. Whenever a new state has been created in the American Union, the Federal government has always retained the ownership and management of the public lands. And when we take the records of our own country, we know that when Manitoba was brought into the Dominion, that province was not given the ownership of her lands, but it remained in the Dominion government. True it is that Manitoba made several efforts to acquire the ownership of the lands within her boundaries. She applied more than once to the successive governments of the Dominion, but her application was always met in the same way. It was always met by the statement that it was impossible to grant her request. The matter was finally closed in 1884 when the government of Sir John Macdonald, which had been approached on the subject, gave very forcibly and clearly the reasons why the prayer of that province could not be entertained. I may be allowed to quote to the House the language used by the government of Sir John Macdonald on the occasion. It will be found in an Order in Council of the 30th May, 1884:—

> The success of the undertakings by the Dominion government in and for the Northwest, depends largely upon the settlement of the lands. Combined with a great expenditure in organizing and maintaining an immigration service abroad and at home, parliament pledged its faith to the world that a large portion of those lands should be set apart for free homesteads to all coming settlers, and another portion to be held in trust for the education of their children. No transfer could, therefore, be made, without exacting from the province the most ample securities that this pledged policy shall be maintained; hence in so far as the free lands extend there would be no monetary advantage to the province, whilst a transfer would most assuredly seriously embarrass all the costly immigration operations which the Dominion government is making mainly in behalf of Manitoba and the Territories.
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> The great attraction which the Canadian government now offers, the impressive fact to the mind of the men contemplating immigration is that a well known and recognized government holds unfettered in its own hand the lands which it offers free, and that that government has its agencies and organizations for directing, receiving, transporting and placing the immigrant upon the homestead which he may select. And if the immigration operations of the Dominion, which involve so large a cost, are to have continued success and to be of advantage to Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, your sub-committee deem it to be of the utmost importance that the Dominion government shall retain and control the lands which it has proclaimed free to all comers. Were there other considerations of sufficient force to induce them to recommend their transfer to Manitoba, and as a consequence and by precedent the surrender to the provinces to be created from the Northwest Territory, all the lands within their boundaries, then they would advise that the provinces holding the lands should conduct their own immigration operations at their own expense.

These reasons, strong and forcible as they were in 1884, are even stronger and more forcible in 1905, because the current of immigration is now flowing into these Territories in an unprecedented volume, and we are therefore compelled to say to the new provinces that we must continue the policy of retaining the ownership and control of the lands in our own hands. It is conceivable that if these lands were given to the new provinces, the policy of either one of them might differ from ours and clash with our efforts to increase immigration. It might possibly render these efforts nugatory. For instance, if either of the new provinces, under the strain of financial difficulty, were to abolish the free homesteads, which have proved so beneficial and so great an inducement to immigration, one can readily understand what a great blow that would be to our immigration policy. Or if the price of government lands for sale were to be increased over the present very moderate rate, that would also be another blow to that policy. But I frankly admit, and we must all recognize, that the provinces in the west, in being deprived of the public lands, are deprived of a valuable source of income. And in that way they complain that they are put on a footing of inequality as compared with the older provinces of the Dominion. Realizing that fact, it is the duty of parliament to make ample, even generous, provision which will compensate the provinces for the retention of the lands by the Federal government, and I believe that in making this provision we shall have the full support of hon. members whether on one side or on the other.

Now I come to the financial terms which should be given to the new provinces. Our constitution, which is to be found in the British North America Act, contains a very remarkable provision. It contains the provision that out of the Federal treasury there shall be paid to the provinces a large amount of money in the shape of subsidies to assist them in carrying on their business. This, I say, is a very extraordinary provision. It is, I believe, unique.

At all events, so far as my information goes, I do not know that any similar provision is to be found in the constitution of any other federal government. It is a sound principle of finance, and a still sounder principle of government, that those who have the duty of expending the revenue of a country should also be saddled with the responsibility of levying and providing it. That principle has been departed from in our case, and no doubt was departed from with some object. What can have been the reasons which induced the fathers of confederation in 1867 to depart from so obvious a principle of finance and government. The reasons are simply these. Confederation was the result of several compromises. It would have been impossible to establish it if there had not been a policy of give and take adopted among all the constituent bodies. And I am quite sure, I am speaking absolute historical truth when I say that neither Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario nor Quebec would ever have consented to part with their revenues, to give up their powers of taxation in customs and excise, if they had not been promised that out of the federal revenues they would be allowed a certain sum every year to defray the expenses of their own local governments and administrations. This is the reason why this provision is to be found in the British North America Act. It is there. I do not think it is sound, but though in my judgment unsound, it is the duty of everybody in this House and in this country to take confederation as we find it, with its good points and its blemishes, and carry it to the end on the principle upon which it was established. Therefore upon this point I believe it is the duty of the Canadian parliament to continue that policy in this instance and make a liberal provision for these two new provinces which we are about to admit into the Canadian family.

But before I come to the revenue to be given these provinces, it will perhaps be preferable that I should give an idea of their present requirements. Last year there was expended out of appropriations by this parliament for the use of the local legislature and by the local legislature itself.

Civil government	$101,540
Legislation	21,375
Administration of Justice	29,000
Public Works	680,000
Education	345,125
Agriculture and Statistics	47,680
Hospitals, charities and public health	20,000
Miscellaneous	68,175

To these must be added sums which were spent by this government on services which in the future will have to be carried on by the governments of the provinces:

Public Works	$100,000
Justice	100,000
Miscellaneous	124,310

And this item of 'miscellaneous' was composed as follows:

Lieutenant-Governor's office	$ 3,880
Incidental Justice	32,000
Insane patients	70,000
Schools in unorganized districts	6,500

So that, last year there was provided for and expended by the Northwest Territories a total sum of $1,636,000.

Mr. FOSTER. Was that provided by this government?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Yes.

Mr. FOSTER. Does the right hon. gentleman know what was raised by the government itself?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Included in this was what was raised by the local government, which, was I believe in the neighbourhood of $150,000. So, this year, if the conditions were to remain as they are, without any increased demands, we should have to provide about $1,636,000, or an average of $818,000 for each province. Of course, there are some items of this expenditure which, under the new conditions, must be duplicated, because there will be two governments instead of one. Besides, as every one knows immigration is flowing rapidly into the Territories, and it is no wonder if the present requirements of the Territories are not sufficiently represented by these figures. More liberal provision must be made for their expenses.

So, I come to the terms which we have made with the provinces—the terms we propose to give them. As the House knows, we are guided in this by the terms of the British North America Act. Section 118 of that Act reads as follows:

> The following sums shall be paid yearly by Canada to the several provinces for the support of their governments and legislatures:
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Ontario | $80,000 |
> | Quebec | 70,000 |
> | Nova Scotia | 60,000 |
> | New Brunswick | 50,000 |
>
> Two hundred and sixty thousand,—and an annual grant in aid of each province shall be made, equal to eighty cents per head of the population as ascertained by the census of one thousand eight hundred and sixty-one, and in case of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, by subsequent decennial census until the population of each of those two provinces amount to four hundred thousand souls, at which rate such grant shall thereafter remain. Such grants shall be in full settlement of all future demands on Canada, and shall be paid half-yearly in advance to each province; but the government of Canada shall deduct from such grants, as against any province, all sums chargeable as interest on the public debt of that province in excess of the several amounts stipulated in this Act.

Now, we propose to make the following terms, keeping as close as possible to the British North America Act. I cite from the Bill:

The following amounts shall be allowed as an annual subsidy to the province of Alberta and shall be paid by the government of Canada by half-yearly instalments in advance: Support of government and legislature, $50,000,—

That is the sum paid to New Brunswick, when the population of that province was about the same as that of Alberta.

—on an estimated population of 250,000 at eighty cents per head $200,000, subject to be increased as hereinafter mentioned, that is to say: The census of the province shall be taken every fifth year, reckoning from the general census of 1901, and an approximate estimate of population shall be made at equal intervals between each quinquennial and decennial census, and, whenever the population, by any such census or estimate should exceed 250,000, the allowance should be increased accordingly until the population has reached 800,000.

Now, the House has observed that in clause 118 of the British North America Act, which I have just read, the capitation allowance of the provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick was fixed at a maximum of 400,000 population. This rule was applied also to Manitoba and British Columbia. The reason why the maximum was fixed at 400,000 population is not very apparent, but I imagine that it was supposed at that time that the population of these provinces was not likely to reach a very much higher figure than 400,000. And this calculation has proven true. It took years for Nova Scotia to reach that maximum; New Brunswick has not reached it yet, nor has Manitoba nor British Columbia. But it would be manifestly unfair to these new provinces to limit their maximum to 400,000. Already the population is about 250,000. Therefore, instead of fixing the maximum at 400,000 population, we have fixed it at 800,000.

A more important allowance is the allowance for debt. And this is what we propose:

Inasmuch as the province is not in debt, the said province should be entitled to be paid and to receive from the government of Canada by half-yearly instalments, interest at the rate of 5 per cent on the sum of $8,107,500.

The reason of this is familiar to everybody, but perhaps, it is not unimportant that I should review it here, and present it again to the House. In 1867, when confederation was established the debts of the provinces were assumed by the Dominion—the debts of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Now, the debt at that time of Old Canada, that is the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, amounted to $67,000,000 in round numbers. The debt of New Brunswick was about $7,000,000 and that of Nova Scotia about $8,000,000. It so happened that the debt of New Brunswick represented an average of about $25 per head of the population, and the debt of Nova Scotia of about $8,000,000 was nearly the same per head of her population. The debt of Old Canada was a little greater per head. Therefore, when allowance was made for the debts of the provinces, the debt of Ontario and Quebec was taken not at $67,000,000, but at $62,000,00. That is, Ontario and Quebec were each relieved of about $31,000,000, Nova Scotia of $8,000,000, and New Brunswick of $7,000,000. The provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick entered confederation without debt, while Ontario and Quebec had between them a debt of about $5,000,000. Later on, new arrangements were made, new debts of the provinces were assumed by the Dominion, and the provinces were freed from such liabilities. By this means the capitation allowance for debt was increased from $25 to $32.43 per head. This is the last allowance that was made for debt, and, if I remember well this was made by statute passed in 1884 or 1885. Therefore, we make this allowance of $34.43 per head to these new provinces. They have a population of 250,000 souls each. This makes a total of $8,107,500.

Mr. FOSTER. On the basis of $32.43?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. On the basis of $32.43, $8,107,500. Upon this we allow the large rate of interest which has been given to all the provinces of 5 per cent. We now come to the allowance for land.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Before the right hon. gentleman touches the land—he has spoken of the population of the Territories as amounting, at the present time, to 500,000 souls, and the allowance both for debt and subsidies based on that; would he be good enough to give us any information in his possession as to that question?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. As I stated a moment ago, by the last census the population of the Northwest Territories was 165,555 souls. Since that time increases have been made, and the population now amounts, according to the last returns placed in my hands, to 417,956 souls. The population is increasing rapidly.

Mr. FOSTER. What was the basis of the estimate?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The returns mostly of immigration, but I will give the exact basis as we have it correctly from the Interior Department. Total population as per census of 1901, 165,555 souls; increase of population by homesteaders since the census of 1901, 221,251 souls.

Mr. FOSTER. Entries or actual settlers?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I do not know that they are actual entries, but we calculate the population upon entries for homesteads. I will read the figures:

Population at present of Northwest Territories (estimated) 417,956.
Total population as per census of 1901.. 165,555
Increase of population of homesteaders since the census of 1901.. 221,251
Increase of population other than homesteaders since census, 1901, say.. 16,000
(Estimated from Waghorn's Guide.)

Estimated natural increase of the population at 1901 to date is..	9,900
Estimated natural increase of the increase of population in 1902 to date is	1,933
Estimated natural increase of the increase of population in 1903 to date is	2,370
Estimated natural increase of the increase of population in 1904 to date is	945
	417,950

Now, this Act is not to come into force until the 1st of July, and we estimate that by the 1st of July the population will have increased to 500,000 souls. This is the basis of our calculation. Now, I said a moment ago, and the House seemed to agree with me, that as we retain the lands in our own hands, it is natural and to be expected that government and parliament would be liberal in their allowance to the new provinces for compensation in that respect. Manitoba, which has an area of 73,000 square miles, received as compensation for her lands some fifteen or twenty years ago an annual grant of $100,000. Apart from that, Manitoba has received the swamp lands. The swamp lands are perhaps the most valuable lands in the province of Manitoba. They require some preliminary work for drainage, but when drained there are no better lands in the whole province. When the late government gave to the province of Manitoba the swamp lands, they made her a valuable gift, and it has proved to her a most important asset. But the Northwest Territories have no swamp lands, we could not do for them what the government did for the province of Manitoba. We have, therefore, made the following arrangement, which we commend to the favourable consideration of the House :

As the public lands in the said provinces are to remain the property of Canada, there shall be paid by Canada to the said provinces annually by way of compensation therefor a sum based upon the estimated value of such lands, (namely, $37,500,000) ; the same being assumed to be of an area of 25,000,000 acres and to be of the value of $1.50 per acre, and upon the population of the said provinces as from time to time ascertained by the quinquennial census thereof, such sum to be arrived at as follows :—

The population of the said provinces being assumed to be at present 250,000, the sum payable until such population reaches 400,000 is to be one per cent on such estimated value, or $375,000.

Thereafter until such population reaches 800,000, the sum payable is to be one and one-half per cent on such estimated value, or $562,500.

Thereafter until such population reaches 1,200,000, the sum payable is to be two per cent on such estimated value, or $750,000.

And thereafter such payment is to be three per cent on such estimated value, or $1,112,500.

In additional compensation for such lands, there shall be paid by Canada to such province annually for five years from the time this Act comes into force to provide for the construction of necessary public buildings, $62,500.

Let me now recapitulate to see the minimum each province is to receive. At present, this year, the province is to receive for civil government $50,000 ; for capitation allowance, $200,000, which is going to increase until the population has reached 800,000 souls. It will receive for debt allowance $405,375, and this year it will receive also for land compensation $375,000 ; total, $1,030,375, to which sum must be added, for five years, $62,500, in order to allow the province to provide for her buildings and public works generally.

This is the minimum which will be paid to the province. The only thing new in these arrangements is in respect to the lands. The maximum which will be paid to the province at any time when the population shall have reached 1,200,000 souls is $1,125,000 ; that is to say, we pay to each of these provinces the maximum sum of $1,125,000 as compensation for the lands which we retain in our possession. I submit to the House that this is a very fair, a very moderate and very equitable adjustment indeed ; at all events, I so present it to the House, and I think it will be so regarded.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. The maximum of the subsidy to the provinces will be reached, as I understand it, when the population reaches the number of 1,200,000. The total annual payments of all kinds reach their maximum when the population reaches the number of 1,200,000, that is, including both the per capita allowance and the allowance for land. Would the right hon. gentleman be good enough to tell us just what that maximum sum will be, including both the subsidy and the allowance in respect of land ?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The per capita allowance will be $640,000.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. But the total of all kinds. Perhaps if the right hon. gentleman has not the figures it is not important.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The total of all kinds would be in the neighbourhood of a little more than $2,000,000.

Now, Sir, it is my duty to advert to a special feature of this Bill, a feature which I wish we could have averted, and which we introduced with great respect. The special clause which I now call the attention of the House to is as follows :—

The territory comprised in the said province shall be and continue to be subject to all such provisions as shall have been enacted respecting the Canadian Pacific Railway Company.

It is within the memory of the House, I have no doubt, that the contract which was made with the Canadian Pacific Railway contained a most extraordinary provision. It was the 16th section :

The Canadian Pacific Railway and all stations and station grounds, workshops, buildings, yards and other property, rolling stock and appurtenances required and used for the construction and working thereof and the capital stock of the company shall be for ever free from taxation by the Dominion, or by any province here-

after to be established or by any municipal corporation therein.

Thus it happens that in 1881 the then parliament deliberately gave to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, which it was incorporating, an absolute exemption from federal, provincial and municipal taxation. It was an extraordinary contract, but the fact stares us in the face, and it is in accordance with British precedent and British policy that contracts have to be executed whether they are good or bad, whether they are advantageous or disadvantageous. In 1884 or 1885, when the limits of the province of Manitoba were extended westward, a similar provision was introduced into the Act of that time to exempt the company from taxation by that province in the territory thus added to her limits. We have to do the same thing to-day. It is a most lamentable condition of things, but all I have to say to the provinces, is that they have to abide by the conditions which exist. In this respect, however, they are in no worse position than the Dominion government itself. We stand to-day, to use a common phrase in the same box. If the Minister of Finance were to introduce a budget wherein he thought it advantageous for the Dominion of Canada to impose taxation upon big corporations, upon the Grand Trunk Railway Company, upon the Bank of Montreal, upon all the other banks and corporations we could do so, but we could not lay a farthing of taxation on the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. That is the result of the condition of things which was enacted by this parliament twenty-four years ago. At that time the opposition led by Mr. Blake protested vigorously against that provision. Mr. Charlton moved the following amendment :—

That the contract respecting the Canadian Pacific Railway exempts perpetually the railway and all stations and station grounds, workshops, buildings, yards and other property, rolling stock and appurtenances, required for the construction and working thereof, and the capital stock of the company, from taxation by the Dominion or by any other province hereafter established, or by any municipal corporation therein. That the property of the corporation shall be in substance a gift from the public; and its exemption from taxation is unjust, creates an unfair incidence of taxation, and gives an undue advantage to the company over other railway companies, calculated to prevent the construction of competing lines, and the contract is, in this respect, objectionable.

Unfortunately this amendment was defeated and that clause of the contract was carried into effect. We have to deal with it to-day as we find it and the provinces as well as the Dominion have to abide by it. All I can say at this moment is that if our efforts and their efforts could rid the new provinces of this incubus, we would be only too glad to give them all the help and assistance in our power, but it is not possible to do so, except by some method that I am not able at the present time to find out. It might be by the way of legislation, it might be through a mutual agreement, or by expropriation. There are some of these methods perhaps open to us, but I have only to say at this moment, that, regrettable as it is, the Dominion and the provinces the provinces and the Dominion must abide by it loyally until such time as it may be possible to find a remedy. That is all I have to say upon the financial clauses of the contract.

I now come to the question of education, and this question is perhaps under existing circumstances the most important of all that we have to deal with. There are evidences not a few coming to us from all directions, that the old passions which such a subject has always aroused are not, unfortunately, buried; indeed, already, before the policy of the government has been known, before the subject is fairly before the people, the government has been warned as to its duty in this matter, and not only warned but threatened as well. The government has been warned, threatened from both sides of this question, from those who believe in separate schools and from those who oppose separate schools. These violent appeals are not a surprise to me, at all events, nor do I believe they are a surprise to anybody. We have known by the experience of the past, within the short life of this confederation, that public opinion is always inflammable whenever questions arise which ever so remotely touch upon the religious convictions of the people. It behooves us therefore all the more at this solemn moment to approach this subject with care, with calmness and deliberation and with the firm purpose of dealing with it not only in accordance with the inherent principles of abstract justice, but in accordance with the spirit—the Canadian spirit of tolerance and charity, this Canadian spirit of tolerance and charity of which confederation is the essence and of which in practice it ought to be the expression and embodiment. Before I proceed further, before I pass the threshold of this question, I put at once this inquiry to the House: What are separate schools? What is the meaning of the term? Whence does it come, what was its origin and what was its object? Perhaps somebody will say: What is the use of discussing such a question? The term separate schools ought to be familiar to every one. Sir, if any one were to make such an observation and to interpose such an objection, I would tell him that never was objection taken with less ground. Mankind is ever the same. New problems and new complications will always arise, but new problems and complications, when they do arise, always revolve within the same well beaten circle of man's passions, man's prejudices and man's selfishness. History therefore should be a safe guide, and it is generally by appealing to the past, by investigating the problems with which our fathers had to deal, that we may find the solutions of the complica-

tions that face us. If we look back to the history of our own country, if we find what is the origin of the separate schools, perhaps history may be the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night to show us the way and give us the light.

Separate schools, Sir, go back to the old days of the legislature of Lower Canada. In these old days the system of schools in my province, in my native province, was rudimentary; there was practically no system, but from year to year allowances were made by the legislature for the support and maintenance of schools. I need not say that the population within the limits of the province of Lower Canada at that time was, as it is to-day, divided in origin and in creed; it was largely Roman Catholic with a small Protestant minority. I am glad to say, and perhaps it would be permitted if, in this matter, being myself a son of the province of Quebec I indulged in what may be not altogether unpardonable pride when I say, that I am not aware that the Protestant minority ever had any cause of complaint of the treatment they had received at the hands of the majority. One of the most eminent men of that day, one of the most eminent colleagues of Sir John Macdonald at the time of confederation, Sir John Rose, bore ample testimony to what I have now stated. This is what he said speaking in the confederation debate:

Now we, the English Protestant minority of Lower Canada, cannot forget that whatever right of separate education we have, was accorded to us in the most unrestricted way before the union of the provinces, when we were in a minority and entirely in the hands of the French population. We cannot forget that in no way was there any attempt to prevent us educating our children in the manner we saw fit and deemed best; and I would be untrue to what is just if I forgot to state that the distribution of state funds for educational purposes was made in such a way as to cause no complaint on the part of the minority.

The system, as I said, was rudimentary; it became more effective, more regulative, after the union of the two provinces, Upper and Lower Canada in 1841.

Mr. SPROULE. Would that not seem to be an argument in favour of leaving it to the provinces?

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I shall come to that presently and I hope I will be able to satisfy my hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) if he will have an open ear on this subject. In 1841 the parliament of United Canada passed a law for the establishment of schools all over the province. Section 11 of that statute provided that:

Whenever any number of the inhabitants of any township or parish professing a religious faith different from that of the majority of the inhabitants of such township or parish, shall dissent from the regulations, arrangements, or proceedings of the common school commissioners, with reference to any common school in such township or parish it shall be lawful for the inhabitants so dissenting, collectively to signify such dissent in writing to the clerk of the district council . . . . and it shall be lawful for such dissenting inhabitants . . . . to establish and maintain one or more common schools in the manner and subject to the visitation, conditions, rules and obligations in this Act provided, with reference to other common schools.

Section 12 enacted that:

No common schools shall be entitled to any apportionment of money out of the common school fund except on the terms and conditions following:

And so forth. No exception was made, whether they were separate or common schools. But it appears that some doubt arose in Upper Canada as to whether or not separate schools were entitled to state aid. In 1855 a school law was adopted and this section was passed.

Every such separate school shall be entitled to share in the fund annually granted by the legislature of the province for the support of common schools according to the average number of pupils attending such school during the twelve preceding months, or during the number of months that may have elapsed from the establishment of said such school as compared with the whole number of pupils attending the schools in the said city, town or village.

In 1863 a law was passed upon this same subject and that was the last passed on the subject by the old legislature of Canada before confederation, not to enact a new principle but simply to confirm the principle of separate schools. I remember very well—I was a young man in those days, a law student in Montreal—that the discussion of that law created a great deal of passion, but it was passed by an overwhelming majority in the parliament of Canada.

Before I proceed, let me make a few observations to show the origin and object of all this legislation concerning separate schools. You find in this legislation the terms constantly recurring of Protestant or Catholic. I need not say that the Christian religion is not only a religion founded on moral laws, prescribing moral duties, but it is also a religion of dogmas. Dogmas from the earliest times have occupied just as strong and commanding a position in the faith of all Christians as morals themselves. The reformation created a cleavage between Christians. The old section remained Roman Catholics; the new called themselves Protestants. Between the Roman Catholics and Protestants there is a deep divergence in dogmas. Between the various Protestant denominations there are but small differences in dogmas; the differences are more matters of discipline than of dogma. Therefore the old legislature of Canada, finding a population of Catholics and different denominations of Protestants

all mixed together, finding only one cause of cleavage between them in Christian faith, that is dogmas, allowed religious teaching to be had in all the schools of our country, so that every man could give to his own child the religious tenets which he held sometimes dearer than life. That is the whole meaning of separate schools.

I have just stated that in 1863 a law was passed on this subject. At that time, in 1863, there were two men in Canada who each within his own circle and his own party, maintained a sovereign sway. One was Mr. Macdonald, now known to history as Sir John Macdonald, and the other was Mr. George Brown. Mr. Macdonald was a supporter of separate schools. He gave to the law of 1863 his vote and his influence. Mr. George Brown, on the contrary, was a most determined opponent of separate schools. He attacked the system relentlessly; he attacked it in his paper, on the floor of the House of Commons and upon the hustings. He attacked it with all the vehemence of his strongly impassioned nature. The arguments we hear to-day against separate schools are not new; they were heard 50 years ago. The arguments we hear to-day are but the attenuated echo of the strong denunciations of Mr. Brown, which were heard by our fathers two generations ago. But the views of Mr. Brown did not prevail, and notwithstanding his efforts, he was not in the House when the law of 1863 passed, which confirmed to the Roman Catholic minority of Upper Canada the privilege of separate schools. In view of the agitation then maintained by Mr. Brown, in favour of representation by population, it is perhaps not inopportune to analyse that vote. The Bill of 1863 in favour of separate schools was carried by a vote of 80 against a minority of 22. Of this minority of 22, 21 belonged to the province of Upper Canada, and of the majority of 80, 33 belonged to that province, so that, leaving the vote of Lower Canada aside, taking only the vote of Upper Canada, we find that the law of 1863 was carried by a majority of the representatives of Upper Canada at that time. This is significant. Mr. Brown at that time was carrying on the strong agitation which he had maintained for years, and which he continued to maintain in favour, within the constitution of that day, of representation by population.

Sir, if we review the events of that period of our history, we must all admit that the constitution of 1841, which united Upper Canada and Lower Canada, was radically faulty. It was so constructed that it never gave satisfaction to either province. Lower Canada from the first looked upon it as an instrument of oppression, designed to deprive her of some of those institutions which she held dearer than life. Yet she it was who in after years held to that constitution, and defended it against reforms which she regarded as fraught with still greater dangers to herself. Upper Canada accepted that constitution, not with any enthusiasm, but because it relieved her for the time from serious financial embarrassments. But Upper Canada, before many years had elapsed commenced also to find herself oppressed by the clumsy clauses which it contained, and sought relief in the agitation of Mr. Brown in favour of representation by population. The radical fault of the constitution of 1841 was that it was neither federative nor legislative. It united two provinces, but kept them as separate entities, gave them the same number of members, provided against an increase of representation, and allowed only a single executive. This equality in representation coupled with a single executive was a defect which no expedients thereafter could altogether overcome. As soon as Mr. Papineau had returned from exile, he attacked that feature of the constitution, and demanded its repeal. He was opposed by Mr. Lafontaine, not on principle, but simply from expediency. Mr. Lafontaine represented to him that Upper Canada would grow in population faster than Lower Canada, because as Upper Canada was getting an immigration which Lower Canada did not, Upper Canada would soon be the stronger province and therefore all the arguments which Mr. Papineau advanced for the repeal of that portion of the constitution on behalf of Lower Canada, would react against her. The predictions of Mr. Lafontaine as to the movement of population were soon fulfilled. Upper Canada became the more populous province. Then Mr. Brown took up the agitation where Mr. Papineau had left it, and carried it on for years, with never abating vigour. He opened a current in the public opinion of Upper Canada, which yearly increased in volume until it became well nigh irresistible; successive and short-lived administrations succeeded one another, and the day came in 1864 when there were two hostile majorities, one from Lower Canada and one from Upper Canada, facing each other and unyielding. There was a deadlock, and the government of the Queen was almost impossible if not actually impossible in the province of Canada. That was Mr. Brown's opportunity, and he seized it, it must be said, with alertness and courage; and whoever has to speak of those events must admit that on that occasion Mr. Brown rose to the highest stature of statesmanship. He was not satisfied to take advantage of the occasion simply to obtain the realization of the principle which he had at heart, but he made it the basis for a union of all the British provinces on the continent of America. That is his glory, and that is his chief title to fame—every Canadian acknowledges it. But, Sir, the difficulties of the task were simply enormous, greater in my judgment, at all events, than

the difficulties which arose in connection with the creation of the American union. History has recorded how jealously, how tenaciously, the thirteen colonies, after their joint efforts had wrought their independence, each clung to its own individual life. History has recorded how reluctantly each of the thirteen colonies at last consented to part with those powers, the concession of which was necessary to form a strong central government. The incentive which proved effective, and which forced a final consent, was the memory of dangers which they had recently shared together, and the necessity of guarding against a possible recurrence of such dangers. No such sentiment abode in the Canadian colonies. The various Canadian colonies were isolated from one another—isolated by distances and by racial distinctions. The two groups which were ethnically connected, Ontario and maritime provinces, were separated by long distances. The two groups which were geographically united, Ontario and Quebec, were separated by the deeper cleavage of difference of origin. In all there was a strong sense of local pride, in all there was a strong assertion of self interest, and in all there were peculiar institutions as to the security of which all dreaded to be launched into the unknown. This was particularly true of education in Lower Canada and in Upper Canada. In Lower Canada the Protestant minority had long enjoyed their own system of separate schools. In Upper Canada the Roman Catholic minority had just secured a similar system. These two minorities feared that in the new constitution, under the separation of legislative powers which must ensue, the rights of each might be put in jeopardy by a hostile majority. The minority of Lower Canada felt perfectly secure under the then existing condition of things because those of their own creed and race were in the majority in United Canada. The Roman Catholic minority in Upper Canada feared also the constitution because it would be deprived of the powerful alliance of those of their own origin in another province. Under such circumstances, what was to be done? How could a scheme of confederation be devised so as to ensure the support of all parties and sections of the community? It is useless to speculate as to what might have been done. It is sufficient to say that means were found to insure to the minority in each province, the free exercise of its rights, and that means was to declare that in the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, the rights of the minority, which were to be entrusted to the respective legislatures of these provinces, were to be above the control of the majority. Let me recall to the House the Quebec resolutions which were adopted and which were the basis and the charter under which the Canadian parliament now lives and the Canadian nation has been formed. Section 93 of the Quebec resolutions states as follows, and I pray you, Sir, mark the language:—

> The local legislatures shall have power to make laws respecting the following subjects:—
>
> 1. Direct taxation, and in New Brunswick the imposition of duties on the export of timber, logs, masts, spars, deals and sawn lumber; and in Nova Scotia, of coals and other minerals.
>
> 2. Borrowing money on the credit of the province.
>
> 3. The establishment and tenure of local offices, and the appointment and payment of local officers.
>
> 4. Agriculture.
>
> 5. Immigration.
>
> 6. Education; saving the rights and privileges which the Protestant or Catholic minority in both Canadas may possess as to their denominational schools at the time when the union goes into operation.

Again I say, mark the language. The legislatures of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario were given the power to make laws for the following purposes:

> Direct taxation.
> Borrowing money.
> The establishment and tenure of local office.
> Agriculture and colonization.

Upon all these subjects their powers are unlimited and they can do as they please, without any check, except their responsibility to the people of their respective provinces. Then on the subject of education the legislatures of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick can do as they please and are not responsible to any one except to the people. But when we come to the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, we find that the powers of these two provinces are limited as regards education. Neither the legislature of Ontario nor that of Quebec was given power to pass any law which might prejudicially affect the rights of the minority in either province. So long as this constitution endures the schools of the minority in Quebec and Ontario must likewise endure. Yet, remarkable as is this enactment, it is perhaps still more remarkable, if we remember that one of the men who assented to this limitation to the power of the province of Ontario was Mr. George Brown himself—Mr. George Brown who said again and again that he was opposed to separate schools, who had carried on a crusade of years against separate schools in his province. If you look only at the surface of things, without trying to find the inspiration, it is indeed remarkable that Mr. Brown, who, with Sir John Macdonald was the central figure, agreed that the powers of the legislature of his own province should be limited in that respect. We need not marvel if Mr. Brown was attacked and assailed for the action he then took. He was assailed perhaps by some of his own disciples whom he had taught to object to separate schools as strongly as he did himself. Mr. Brown defended his course in the confederation de-

bate, or rather he explained his policy, because he was under no necessity to defend his course; and I beg on this occasion to commend his language to those who to-day have forgotten confederation, when he came to discuss the 43rd resolution. He spoke as follows:—

The people of Upper Canada will have another legislature for their local matters and will no longer have to betake themselves to Quebec for leave to open a road, to select a county town, or appoint a coroner. But I am told that to this general principle of placing all local matters under local control, an exception has been made in regard to the common schools. (Hear, hear.)

The clause complained of is as follows:—

6. Education, saving the rights and privileges which the Protestant or Catholic minority in both Canadas may possess as to their denominational schools at the time when the union goes into operation.

Now, continued Mr. Brown:—

I need hardly remind the House that I have always opposed and continue to oppose the system of sectarian education, so far as the public chest is concerned. I have never had any hesitation on that point, I have never been able to see why all the people in the province, to whatever sect they may belong, should not send their children to the same schools to receive the ordinary branches of instruction. I regard the parent and the pastor as the best religious instructors—and so long as the religious faith of the children is not interfered with, and ample opportunity afforded to the clergy to give religious instruction to the children of their flocks, I cannot see any sound objection to mixed schools. But while in the conference and elsewhere I have always maintained this view, and always given my vote against sectarian public schools, I am bound to admit, as I have always admitted, that the sectarian system carried to the limited extent it has yet been in Upper Canada, and confined as it chiefly is to cities and towns, has not been a very great practical injury. The real cause of a line was that the admission of the sectarian principle was there, and that at any moment it might be extended to such a degree as to split up our school system altogether. There are about a hundred separate schools in Upper Canada, out of some 4,000, and all Roman Catholic. But if the Roman Catholics are entitled to separate schools and to go on extending their operations, so are the members of the Church of England, the Presbyterians, the Methodists, and all other sects. No candid Roman Catholic will deny this for a moment; and there lays the great danger to our educational fabric, lest the separate system might gradually extend itself until the whole country was studded with nurseries of sectarianism, most hurtful to the best interests of the province and entailing an enormous expense to sustain the host of teachers that so prodigal a system of public instruction must inevitably entail. Now, it is known to every hon. member of this House that an Act was passed in 1863 as a final settlement of this sectarian controversy. I was not in Quebec at the time, but if I had been here, I would have voted against that Bill because it extended the facilities for establishing separate schools. It had, however, this good feature, that it was accepted by the Roman Catholic authorities and carried to parliament as a final compromise of the question in Upper Canada. When, therefore, it was proposed that a provision should be inserted in the confederation scheme to bind that contract of 1863 and declare it a final settlement, so that we should not be compelled, as we have been since 1849, to stand constantly to our arms, awaiting fresh attacks upon our common school system, the proposition seemed to me one that was not rashly to be rejected. (Hear, hear.) I admit that, from my point of view, this is a blot on the scheme before the House; it is confessedly, one of the concessions from our side that had to be made to secure this great measure of reform. But assuredly, I, for one, have not the slightest hesitation in accepting it as a necessary condition of the scheme of union, and doubly acceptable must it be in the eyes of hon. gentlemen opposite, who were the authors of the Bill of 1863. (Cheers.) But it was urged that though this arrangement might perhaps be fair as regards Upper Canada, it was not so as regards Lower Canada, for there were matters of which the British population have long complained, and some amendments to the existing School Act were required to secure them equal justice. Well, when this point was raised, gentlemen of all parties in Lower Canada at once expressed themselves prepared to treat it in a frank and conciliatory manner, with a view to removing any injustice that might be shown to exist; and on this understanding the educational clause was adopted by the conference.

Mr. T. C. WALLBRIDGE. That destroys the power of the local legislature to legislate upon the subject.

Hon. Mr. BROWN. I would like to know how much power the hon. gentleman has now to legislate upon it? Let him introduce a Bill today to annul the contract of 1863 and repeal all the sectarian School Acts of Upper Canada, and how many votes would he get for it? Would twenty members vote for it out of the 130 who compose this House? If the hon. gentleman had been struggling for fifteen years, as I have been, to save the school system of Upper Canada from further extension of the sectarian element, he would have precious little diminution of power over it in this very moderate compromise. And what says the hon. gentleman to leaving the British population of Lower Canada in the unrestricted powers of the local legislature? The common schools of Lower Canada are not as in Upper Canada—they are almost entirely non-sectarian, Roman Catholic schools. Does the hon. gentleman, then, desire to compel the Protestants of Lower Canada to avail themselves of Roman Catholic institutions or leave their children without instruction?

Let us pause a moment to consider this language. Mr. Brown did not believe in separate schools. He had struggled all his life against that system. But a great object had to be achieved, a noble conception had to be realized, an inspiring idea had to be made a fact, and in order to reach that supreme goal, differences of opinion had to be reconciled, fears and apprehensions had to be removed, misgivings had to be alleviated, and above all the rights of conscience, the tender rights of conscience, had to be placed in as firm a position of security as they previously enjoyed, so that no one could object, and all, without regard to origin or creed, could

give a cheerful and enthusiastic support to the new constitution.

Sir, Mr. Brown told his friends that he did not believe in separate schools; but there were fellow-citizens of his in Ontario and in Quebec who believed in separate schools, and, in order to remove their objections and win their co-operation in the scheme which was the great work of his life, he agreed to make the sacrifice of his own convictions. In order to achieve the great object he had at heart, he agreed to fasten upon his own province a system in which he did not believe, but in which others did believe. Sir, for more than twenty years Mr. Brown has been in his grave; but his memory is not dead. And if his teachings and his spirit be still alive, it is surely in the hearts of that staunch yeomanry of Ontario who gave him such constant support during the years of his political struggles. They followed him devotedly in his crusade against separate schools. They followed him even more devotedly, when he asked them to accept separate schools, to sacrifice their own opinions, and his own, upon the altar of the new country which it was his ambition to establish on this portion of the North American continent. If it were my privilege that my poor words might reach that staunch yeomanry of Ontario, I would remind them that the work of confederation is not yet finished; I would tell them that we are now engaged in advancing it; and I would ask them whether we are now to reverse our course, or whether we are not to continue to work it out to completion on the lines laid down by the great leader himself.

Now, Sir, such was the condition of things at the time of confederation. But I shall be told that this exception applies to Ontario and Quebec alone, and not to the other provinces. Sir, that is true. Amongst the four provinces then united, Ontario and Quebec alone had a system of separate schools. But I reminded the House a moment ago that it was not the intention of the fathers of confederation, it was not the intention of Sir John Macdonald or Mr. Brown to limit confederation to the narrow bounds it had in 1867. They had made provision in the very instrument of confederation, to extend it over the northern part of the continent; they had made provision to take in British Columbia, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island; they had made provision to take in also the Northwest Territories, which were then uninhabited, but which now have a teeming population and are at our doors asking admission. Is it reasonable to suppose, if the Confederation Act recognizes that other provinces were to come into confederation similarly situated to Ontario and Quebec, that the same privileges should not be given to the minority as were given to the minority in Ontario and Quebec? What would have been the value of the invitation to enter confederation, if the provinces invited to enter, had been told that the security to the minority given to Ontario and Quebec was a privilege which they need not expect from us? Section 43 of the Quebec resolutions has become section 93 of the British North America Act, and is no longer confined to Quebec and Ontario. Here it is:

> In and for each province the legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to education, subject and according to the following provision:—
>
> 1. Nothing in any such law shall prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools which any class of persons have by law in the province at the union.

So, Sir, now whenever a province comes here knocking at this door, asking to be admitted into confederation, if in that province there exists a system of separate schools, the British North America Act has provided that the same guarantee we give to the minority in Quebec and Ontario shall also be given to the minority in that province. Shortly after confederation had been established, that is, in the year 1870, the parliament of Canada had an opportunity of applying the doctrine contained in the British North America Act in the creation of the province of Manitoba. Until its admission into the Dominion, Manitoba had no regular government. It had been loosely administered by the Hudson Bay Company. There had been some schools in it, maintained by such authority as there was. There had been separate schools maintained by Roman Catholic missionaries. It was the intention of parliament to give the minority the system that they had before confederation; and, so marked was their intention, that instead of accepting without qualification the words of section 93 of the British North America Act, 'right or privilege with respect to denominational schools which any class of persons have by law in the province at the union,' they made it read 'by law or practice in the province at the union.' It turned out, as determined by judicial authority, that the province of Manitoba, when it entered confederation, had no system of schools either by law or practice. It followed, as a consequence, that the power of the province of Manitoba with regard to the subject of education was as complete as that of the province of Nova Scotia or the province of New Brunswick. This is a principle which was not understood at the time by hon. gentlemen opposite when they were on this side of the House. There was the fact, the positive fact—the power of the province of Manitoba with regard to education was as unshackled as that of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. In 1875, as I stated a moment ago, Mr. Mackenzie introduced an Act for the government of the Northwest Territories, and in this Act the parliament of Canada, which, at that time, had among its members some of the ablest men who ever sat in a Cana-

dian parliament—Sir John Macdonald, Mr. Mackenzie, Mr. Blake, Sir Charles Tupper and a score of others—unanimously, deliberately and with their eyes open, introduced into the Northwest Territories the system of separate schools. And not only that, but the parliament of Canada, four times successively—in 1880, in 1885, in 1886 and in 1898—deliberately and with their eyes open, ratified the system of separate schools in the Territories.

Mr. SPROULE. I would like to ask here one question, if the right hon. gentleman will allow me?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Yes.

Mr. SPROULE. The right hon. gentleman gave the House to understand that Hon. George Brown supported the principle of separate schools. May I ask if it is not true that Mr. Brown, in 1875, opposed the principle of authorizing separate schools in the Territories, voted against it and gave his reasons?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I am delighted that my hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) has asked me that question. In 1875, when the Bill to which I have referred went through parliament, Mr. Brown who was a member of one branch of this parliament, opposed the introduction of the new clause in that Bill providing for separate schools. He opposed it with all his might. He told the House that he had not changed his mind upon the subject, but he told the House also that if the principle of separate schools was introduced, then, according to the terms of the constitution, it was introduced for all time to come. I am delighted that my hon. friend brought my attention to this, because really the whole subject is contained in the question of my hon. friend. We have to decide this problem upon the very terms of the legislation which was introduced in 1875. Let me give to my hon. friend all the information to which he is entitled, and which I fain would hope will fall upon favourable ground; I will give him the whole history of that matter. Mr. Mackenzie himself introduced the Bill in 1875. The Bill as first introduced made no mention of separate schools; but after he had sat down and when Sir John A. Macdonald had spoken on the subject, Mr. Blake rose and brought this very subject of separate schools to the attention of the House, and he did it with a height and breadth of thought which I hope will command the admiration of my hon. friend. This is what Mr. Blake said:

> The task which the ministry had set for itself was the most important it was possible to conceive. To found primary institutions under which we hope to see hundreds of thousands, and the more sanguine among us think millions of men and families settled and flourishing, was one of the noblest undertakings that could be entered upon by any legislative body, and it was no small indication of the power and true position of this Dominion that parliament should be engaged to-day in that important task. He agreed with the hon. member for Kingston that the task was one that required time, consideration and deliberation, and they must take care that no false steps were made in such work. He did not agree with that right hon. gentleman that the government ought to repeal his errors. The right hon. gentleman had tried the institutions for the Northwest Territories which he now asked the House to frame, and for the same reason as he had given to-day—that it would be better for the Dominion government to keep matters in their own hands and decide what was best for the future. He (Mr. Blake) believed that it was essential to our obtaining a large immigration to the Northwest that we should tell the people beforehand what those rights were to be in the country in which we invited them to settle. It was interesting to the people to know that at the very earliest moment there was a sufficient aggregate of population within a reasonable distance, that aggregation would have a voice in the self-government of the territories, and he believed the Dominion government was wise, (although the measure might be brought down very late this session and it might be found impossible to give it due consideration) in determining in advance of settlement what the character of the institutions of the country should be in which we invite people to settle.
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> He regarded it as essential under the circumstances of the country, and in view of the deliberation during the last few days that a general principle should be laid down in the Bill with respect to public instruction. He did believe that we ought not to introduce into that territory the heart burnings and difficulties with which certain other portions of this Dominion and other countries had been afflicted. It seemed to him, having regard to the fact that, as far as we could expect at present, the general character of that population would be somewhat analogous to the population of Ontario, that there should be some provision in the constitution by which they should have conferred upon them the same rights and privileges in regard to religious instruction as those possessed by the people of the province of Ontario. The principles of local self-government and the settling of the question of public instruction, it seemed to him, ought to be the cardinal principles of the measure.

Now let me call renewed attention to these words of Mr. Blake: 'I regard it as essential under the circumstances of the country, and in view of the deliberation of the last few days.' What were the deliberations of those last few days in the House of Commons to which Mr. Blake alluded? Why, Sir, it was a resolution on that very subject of separate schools, separate schools in the province of New Brunswick, where at that time, and by the constitution, the principle of separate schools was not adopted; the minority was asking for separate schools, and came to this House for relief, but the House would not grant the relief because they would not invade the constitution. Mr. Blake said that instead of having such a state of things in the Northwest Territories it would be better to

give to the people the religious instruction that all classes might want. Now what was Mr. Mackenzie's answer to this ?

As to the subject of public instruction, it did not in the first place attract his attention, but when he came to the subject of local taxation he was reminded of it. Not having had time before to insert a clause on the subject, he proposed to do so when the Bill was in committee. The clause provided that the Lieutenant Governor by and with the consent of his council or assembly, as the case might be, should pass all necessary ordinances in respect of education, but it would be specially provided that the majority of the ratepayers might establish such schools and impose such necessary assessment as they might think fit ; and that the minority of the ratepayers, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, might establish separate schools ; and such ratepayers would be liable only to such educational assessments as they might impose upon themselves. This he hoped would meet the objection offered by the hon. member for South Bruce. There might be some amendments found necessary in the Bill, but he thought it would be found generally speaking to meet the requirements of the country. However, the government would be very glad to avail themselves as far as possible of such suggestions as might be made to them.

When the Bill was in committee Mr. Mackenzie proposed this clause, which was inserted in the Bill, not one member objecting to it, neither Sir John A. Macdonald, nor Sir Charles Tupper, nor any member on the government side of the House :

When and so soon as any system of taxation shall be adopted in any district or portion of the Northwest Territories, the Lieutenant Governor and council or assembly, as the case may be, shall pass all necessary ordinances in respect of education, and it shall therein be always provided that a majority of ratepayers in any district may establish such schools therein as they may think fit, and make the necessary assessment and rates therefor, and further that the minority of ratepayers therein whether Protestant or Roman Catholics, may establish separate schools therein, and that in such case the ratepayers establishing such Protestant or Roman Catholic separate schools shall be liable only to assessment of such rates as they impose upon themselves in respect thereof.

Now this Bill went over to the other branch of the legislature, and there also I will give to my hon. friend who interrupted me a moment ago, the whole history of the debate upon this Bill. Mr. Aikens, who was then a prominent member of that body, moved to strike out the education clause altogether. He was answered by my hon. friend and colleague of to-day, the Secretary of State, who then as now was the leader of the Senate :

Any gentleman would have to admit that it was the greatest possible relief to the people of Ontario that this question was settled for them, and was not, as in some of the other provinces, a source of constant discord. He was one of those who maintained that parents had a right to educate their children as they pleased, and that they ought not to be taxed to maintain schools to which they could not conscientiously send their children. Our whole system of government was based upon that sound principle.

Now, Sir, I will give to my hon. friend the opinion of the Hon. Mr. Brown. But, before doing so, let me give him the opinion of a prominent member of his own party, Sir Alexander Campbell, who was then leader of the Conservative party in the Senate. Sir Alexander Campbell spoke as follows :—

It would be much to be regretted if the amendment passed. The object of the Bill was to establish and perpetuate in the Northwest Territories the same system as prevailed in Ontario and Quebec and which had worked so well in the interests of peace and harmony with the different populations of these provinces. He thought the fairer course, and the better one, for all races and creeds, was to adopt the suggestion of the government and enable people to establish separate schools in that territory and thus prevent the introduction of evils from which Ontario and Quebec had suffered, but had judiciously rid themselves.

I will now give to my hon. friend the language of Mr. Brown, this is it :

The safe way for us was to let each province suit itself in such matters. This country was filled by people of all classes and creeds, and there would be no end of confusion if each class had to have its own peculiar school system. It had been said this clause was put in for the protection of the Protestants against the Catholics, the latter being the most numerous. But he, speaking for the Protestants, was in a position to say that we did not want that protection.

Later on Mr. Brown spoke as follows :

Hon. Mr. Brown said he concurred with what had fallen from his hon. friends on the treasury benches, and from hon. gentlemen who had spoken on the ameadment, with respect to the propriety of allowing separate schools. But the question was not whether those schools were right or wrong, good or bad, but as to whether it was wise for this country to deal with this question. He quite admitted the importance of the issue which had been raised—whether this matter should be referred to the province interested for settlement, or be brought to the Dominion legislature.

The moment——

——continued Mr. Brown——

——this Act passed and the Northwest became part of the union, they came under the Union Act, and under the provisions with regard to separate schools.

Sir, I commend this language to my hon. friend. I commend this language to every man in this House. There are to-day, as there were then, men in this House and out of it who do not believe in separate schools, but, as Mr. Brown said, the question is not whether that system is good or bad ; that is not the question to-day, that is not the question of which Senator Brown spoke, it is not the question with which we have to deal. But we have another duty to perform. Mr. Brown, on the floor of the other branch of

the legislature, said that his opinions in regard to separate schools had not changed. He said practically this to the parliament of Canada: There is a new territory, there is virgin soil where there is no population. Do not introduce separate schools into it, do not introduce that burning question into it, but the moment you have introduced separate schools you have solved the question forever, it is part of the union and the minority will have its right to such schools.

Mr. SPROULE. The right hon. gentleman——

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Now, we have introduced into this Bill—I beg my hon. friend's pardon.

Mr. SPROULE. I am only desirous of making one observation in regard to a part of Mr. Brown's speech which more directly refers to this subject and which the hon. gentleman has not quoted.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. If that is the interruption of my hon. friend it was hardly worth while. I do not want to mislead the House. Can he find anything else than that Mr. Brown submitted the opinion that the moment separate schools were introduced they come under the Act of union, under clause 93 and that they were there to be maintained against the power of the legislature? Can he find anything else? Let him quote anything to the contrary.

Mr. SPROULE. Mr. Brown was arguing against the introduction of separate schools and he gives the following as his reasons:

He spoke in the interest of good feeling and harmony in the national councils. What else was the clause in the constitution empowering the provinces to settle the school question themselves inserted for, but to get quit of controversies like this in the Dominion, and to leave the schools to be managed according to the views of each locality? By this Bill they might raise the very serious issues in the North-west which had proved so troublesome to Quebec and Ontario. No one would regret this more than he, and for this reason he would support the motion of the hon. member for Peel.

Which was that this clause should be dropped thus leaving it to the provinces.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. It is ever the old story—none so blind as those who will not see, none so deaf as those who will not hear. I repeat again that Mr. Brown, on the floor of the Senate, did not want this clause providing for separate schools to be introduced in the Act. He stated that it would be a mistake to introduce separate schools, he said that he was opposed to separate schools, but he said that if at that time separate schools were introduced they came under the Act of Union and they were there for all time. I do not want to be offensive, but if my hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) is not blind he will understand the reasoning of Mr. Brown. That is the position that we have before us to-day. I am not here to advocate separate schools as an abstract proposition but we have introduced into this Bill the two propositions, that the minority shall have the power to establish their own schools and that they shall have the right to share in the public moneys. It is the law to-day. It is in accord with the constitution, with the British North America Act, and I commend it even to the biased judgment of my hon. friend. However, let me put a question to my hon. friend: If we were in the year 1867 and not in the year 1905, and, if we had to introduce into this Dominion the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, would my hon. friend tell me that these provinces would not have the same rights and privileges in regard to separate schools as were granted to Ontario and Quebec? Would he tell me that when you say to Ontario and Quebec: You shall have your separate schools, Alberta and Saskatchewan should be denied that privilege? The thing is preposterous. Let us rise above such considerations. In everything that I have said I have refrained from saying a single word upon the abstract principle of separate schools. I approach the question upon another and a broader ground, I approach the question not from the view of separate schools, but I approach it upon the higher ground of Canadian duty and Canadian patriotism. Having obtained the consent of the minority to this form of government, having obtained their consent to the giving up of their valued privileges, and their position of strength are we to tell them, now that confederation is established, that the principle upon which they consented to this arrangement, is to be laid aside and that we are to ride roughshod over them? I do not think that is a proposition which will be maintained in this House, nor do I believe it is the intention of the House. I offer at this moment no opinion at all upon separate schools as an abstract propostion, but I have no hesitation in saying that if I were to speak my mind upon separate schools, I would say that I never could understand what objection there could be to a system of schools wherein, after secular matters have been attended to, the tenets of the religion of Christ, even with the divisions which exist among His followers, are allowed to be taught. We live in a country wherein the seven provinces that constitute our nation, either by the will or by the tolerance of the people, in every school, Christian morals and Christian dogmas are taught to the youth of the country. We live by the side of a nation, a great nation, a nation for which I have the greatest admiration, but whose example I would not take in everything, in whose schools for fear that Christian dogmas in which all do not believe might be taught, Chris-

lian morals are not taught. When I compare these two countries, when I compare Canada with the United States, when I compare the status of the two nations, when I think upon their future, when I observe the social condition of civil society in each of them and when I observe in this country of ours, a total absence of lynchings and an almost total absence of divorces and murders, for my part, I thank heaven that we are living in a country where the young children of the land are taught Christian morals and Christian dogmas. Either the American system is right or the Canadian system is wrong. For my part I say this and I say it without hesitation. Time will show that we are in the right and in this instance as in many others, I have an abiding faith in the institutions of my own country.